All the O's are faulty; for they should all be round, with a uniform circumference,* and not oval or melon-shaped.†

* *That is, circular.*

† *'Meslongue.' I find no trace of this word, and connect it with 'melon' by pure conjecture.*

All the P's are good enough.

All the Q's are altogether wrong, as well in the upper part (as I have said of the O's) as in the tail, which is too thin & not properly proportioned.

The R's are good.

The S's are faulty, for the openings are too much closed, or rounded, both the upper and the lower, and the body is ill-shaped.

On leaf XXXVII‡ the white T and the black are faulty and irregular; for the upper line should be everywhere equidistant from the lower line. And the third T, which is not at fault in this respect, is not cut as it should be, for the first arm should be perpendicular & the last slightly inclined; and this is just the opposite.

‡ *Grolier Club ed. p. 27.*

The V is very good.

The X is too open above.

The Y is good.

The Z is faulty, for the lower line should be longer than the upper. The first end of this upper line should be perpendicular, and the other end, a half-unit in length, also perpendicular. The lower line should be inclined, as in the last three and the first.

WE can forgive the said Albert Dürer, inasmuch as his vocation was painting, and it rarely happens that painters are good grammarians in the matter of understanding the qualities & proportions of well-formed letters. I know no man who makes or understands them better than Maistre Simon Hayeneufve, otherwise called Maistre Simon du Mans.[29] He makes them so well & of such admirable proportions, that he contents the eye as well as, yes, better than any Italian master on either side of the mountains. He is most eminent in the disposition of ancient architecture, as one may see in a thousand fine drawings & pictures that he has made in the noble city of Le Mans & in many foreign cities. He is worthy to be kept in fragrant memory, as well for his upright life as for his great learning. And therefore, let us without pretence consecrate and dedicate his name to immortality, declaring him to be a second Vitruvius, a holy man & good Christian. I write this gladly because of the great virtues & goodly qualities that I have heard ascribed to him by many good men, of high and low degree, and true lovers of all excellent and honourable things. Would God that France had ten like him: then never was Egypt or Greece or Italy so eminent in architecture as she would be. I know no author, Greek, or Latin, or French, who gives such an explanation of the letters as I have given; wherefore I may hold it for my own, saying that I have excogitated it & discovered it rather by divine inspiration than by what I have seen written or have heard. If there be any who has seen it in writing, let him so say, and he will give me pleasure.

ALL our Attic letters should be & are of a height contained between two equidistant lines, as is the circle of the letter Q; but its tail, as I have said, goes below the line, to embrace its friend and loving companion V.

I Would here set down another conception of my own, and that is the reason why I choose to divide each square in which we shall draw our three-and-twenty letters into ten units of height and likewise into ten of breadth. It is to point out that the ancients wished to signify, covertly, that the nine Muses, & Apollo, who makes the tenth, are held in honour and sought out by well-made letters, whose appearance depends upon their proper and harmonious proportions. Lucian, in his Dialogue *Timon,* near the end, has in mind these nine Muses when he introduces the philosopher Thrasicles saying that he drank only of the fountain at Athens that discharged through nine pipes. *Porro,* he says, *potum fons Athenis nouem saliens venis suppeditat.*[30] Truly, he says, the fountain at Athens that discharges through nine pipes furnishes the philosopher Thrasicles with drinking water.

AND so I show here the said nine Muses and their Apollo arranged symmetrically according to our standard and model letter I. And if you find aught that is pleasing therein, I beg that you will be grateful to me; & if not, then I beg that you will forgive me. For, while studying, I cannot refrain from ever imagining some new thing, thinking to give honour & assistance to other students, and to advance the public weal. I leave others to think as they will, and devote myself to the Muses and well-formed letters.

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